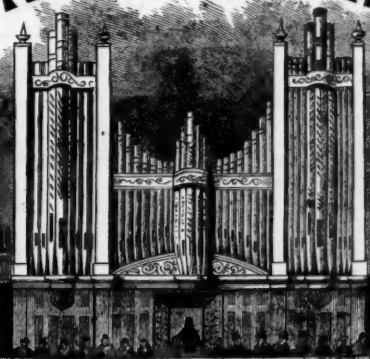


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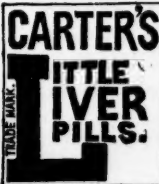
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Unmusical Ministers.

A MINISTER who both loves and thoroughly understands music is a rarity. There are, undoubtedly, many who appreciate it, but very few who are entitled to be called musicians. Those who can lay claim to the title probably gained their musical knowledge for some other reason than to enable them the more efficiently to discharge their ministerial duties; most likely they were taught at school, before their work in life was determined upon, but now they find the value of their early instruction. A church that has a musical minister who exercises a wise influence over the worship music is very fortunate. Not only does he render help in improving the services, but he is certainly drawn into more frequent contact with his people, especially the younger of them, and, therefore, has large opportunities of gaining their confidence and esteem. Moreover, though it is wise to leave the entire control of the music in the hands of the organist and choirmaster, he is able to advise and confer with them if required.

Ought not every minister, therefore, to have a fair knowledge of music, as one of the qualifications necessary to fit him to fulfil the duties of his office? We certainly think so. Never has there been a greater demand, or a greater necessity, for musical ministers than at the present time. On all sides congregations are eager for better musical services,

and they ought to be able to look to the ministers, not only to give effect to their wishes, but to exercise a wise discretion in the guidance of the reformation.

The rudiments of music, at least, ought to be taught in every college for training young men for ministerial work. So far as we know, this is not done at a single college belonging to any denomination. As the Rev. J. Halsey well put it, in a paper which appeared in our columns a few months ago: "Students are required to be orthodox on the subject of the Divine decrees, about which no man can possibly know anything; but they are not required to possess the merest smattering even of subjects which it is possible to know a good deal about, and ignorance of which is a very serious drawback to the usefulness of a man who has to lead the actions of others." Yes, it is the custom to instruct ministerial students in all sorts of subjects that will be of no practical value to them in their work, and ignore music, the knowledge of which they would daily find helpful to them. Before a candidate for the ministry can pass muster in the estimation of the sedate and old-fashioned professors, he must satisfy them upon a hundred theological points, but he is not questioned if he can "raise" a tune if called upon; he must have the various branches of mathematics at his fingers' ends, but whether he knows the difference between the *Old Hundredth*, and *God save the Queen* is a matter of perfect indifference. It would be well if College committees and subscribers to the College funds would insist upon music being included in the curriculum, in order that the students might, at least, have an insight into what is necessary to lead a service of praise.

If men are not taught the value of music while they are students, they can hardly be expected to show much interest in it in later years. It is, however, to be regretted that so little reference is made to the Service of Praise in the meetings of ministers for discussion of questions appertaining to their work. During all the recent May Meetings of the various denominations held in London, innumerable papers were read, and speeches made, upon almost every conceivable topic relating to Church work, but not a single paper or speech, so far as we know, was devoted to the subject of worship music. But surely the Service of Praise ought to be, as interesting—and certainly it is as important to the congregations—as many of the subjects that were very fully discussed. "It is never too late to mend," so we trust the time will quickly come, when students and ministers will see the wisdom of acquiring a thorough knowledge of music, and taking an active part in making our Church Services brighter and better.

WE hope many friends interested in Nonconformist church music will make a point of attending the Festival at the Crystal Palace on Saturday, June 1st, at 4 p.m. Over a hundred choirs—or a total of about three thousand voices—will take part. Railway tickets (including admission) may

be had at our office, or from any of the choirs, price 1s. 6d. Every effort has been made by the executive and by all the choirmasters to make the Festival a success. We trust their hopes will be fully realized.

OUR July number will contain a full and special report of the Crystal Palace Festival. We have engaged several writers to undertake this work for us, so it ought to be an interesting number to every member of the choir. We shall give likenesses of the conductors and organists.

WE have this month something to say about "Unmusical Ministers." We, however, feel gratified to receive the following testimony from a minister who is a thorough musician: "Let me say how much I appreciate your unique journal month by month. It only requires to be known to be greatly valued by all who are interested in worship music. I never lose an opportunity of introducing it to my friends, and all who see it speak highly of it."

WE are also much encouraged by receiving the following letter from a Liverpool choirmaster: "Permit me to take this opportunity of contributing my personal thanks for your most valuable journal. I have been a subscriber from the beginning, and have watched its development with much satisfaction, and must acknowledge to receiving much more useful information than I have ever been able to obtain from any other musical publication to which I have subscribed. The article on 'The Duties and Responsibilities of Choirs'" [part of which appeared in the May number, and is continued in the present issue] "is most opportune, and I should be most pleased to see it published in pamphlet form for circulating more widely amongst choir members. It would, I am persuaded, have a very beneficial result."

WE have received a similar request from other choirmasters. We have, therefore, reprinted the article in pamphlet form, which may be obtained from our office, price 1d. each, or 9d. per dozen.

Religious Services: How to Conduct Them.

THE following is an extract from a very interesting paper read by Dr. Short, of Ward Chapel, Dundee, at the meeting of the Scotch Congregational Union at Aberdeen:—

"The musical service of praise is another part of the service of God which also demands our best and highest. Music, whether sacred or secular, is the ex-

pression of musical thought and mystic feeling, the eloquence of deep sensibilities; and, like the other perceptions of beauty with which God has endowed us, has been wonderfully developed within the last hundred and fifty years. The faculty and the taste for music have been more universally cultivated during the last thirty years than any other powers of the soul. Vocal and instrumental music is a part of the training in all private schools, and singing is taught in all the public schools elementary and secondary. And the culture thus initiated is carried forward at home in private, and fostered and developed by concerts and oratorios and operas in public. The majority of our young people, if they cannot sing or play themselves, have yet musical taste more or less cultivated, and can feel the immense difference between good and bad music when they hear it. But what do they hear when they go to Church on Sundays? In some churches and cathedrals they will hear the best sacred music, such as will afford the highest gratification; but it must in all fairness be said that too often as the musical service is rich, the other parts are poor and uninteresting—a fine liturgy gabbled over, and a mere schoolboy sermon. In other churches you have just the reverse of this. The sermons have an average amount of educated mind put into them, the extemporary prayers are decent unprepared utterances, but the musical service to say the least is unsatisfactory. It is an immense transition from the concert hall and the oratorio. It offends the taste of all people who have any musical feeling or culture. It is not religious—does not express any devout emotion; neither does it satisfy any æsthetic sentiment. I need say nothing of those in our congregations who despise and reject all musical art in public worship. The singing they enjoy, if they have any enjoyment in it, is abundantly supplied by some churches and their precentors. If such a performance were heard at an evening party, the hearers, if they were polite, would quietly leave the room; and if in a public concert-room, the audience would forget good manners, and hiss the singers off the platform. I should be ashamed to caricature any of the solemnities of public worship; but I am sure it does not help a devout worshipper to see what I have sometimes seen—a precentor, whose voice is uncertain when rising towards the higher notes, but still straining with every movement of his body to reach them, sensitive persons trembling lest he should go off with a breakdown *crack*. If his voice should not be very powerful, he has no instrument to assist him, except the swing of his arm, and the beat of time by the movement of his head or hand; and if there be a gallery in the Church the chances are that the congregation fall into different times, and understand Charles Wesley's hymn when he wrote,

"They sing the Lamb in hymns above,
And we in hymns below."

But sometimes the precentor has the assistance of a harmonium or American organ, and a choir of the best voices he can gather out of the congregation. And I am sure we ought to sympathize with and help every effort in this direction. But the result is often very poor. You can easily hear that there are excellent voices, but

they want training, and perhaps the choir-master himself wants training: and the effect, upon the whole, is not satisfying to those who want to be uplifted and to catch some of the loftier strains of choral music.

"If you ask me how this low musical standard is to be lifted into something higher, all I can say is that the people in a congregation who have musical taste and accomplishment, ought to come to the rescue and exert a wise influence to make Church music, not only not offensive, but as beautiful and perfect as congregational music can be made. Some unmusical people would still object to what they call human hymns, and assert the sufficiency of the metrical psalms, but happily they are vanishing."

The Duties and Responsibilities of a Choir.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 74.)

THE singing in our churches—or in many of them at least—lacks expression. If we cannot convey to the congregation a correct interpretation of the words we sing, we fail in our work. The sentiment must come first, and the music second. So many notes may be sung in an artistic manner, like an exercise, but unless they clothe the words and carry the meaning of them to the hearts of the congregation, we are simply giving a performance. The want of expression is generally the result of thoughtlessness. We sing without thinking what we are singing. The words of hymns, chants, and anthems, or whatever else may be sung in the service, should be carefully studied beforehand, so as to ascertain how they can be rendered to produce the most effect. This opens a subject upon which opinions would probably very widely differ, and upon which we cannot now enter. In passing, however—and simply as examples of what may be done in this direction—I would say that in such a hymn as

"Who is this so weak and helpless?"

the choir alone might sing the first four lines, and the congregation join in the last four lines, of each verse. This gives a much greater effect than the whole body of voices singing right through, though the first four lines may be sung *pp*, and the last four lines *ff*. Some similar arrangement might be made in the hymn

"Art thou weary, art thou languid,
Art thou sore distressed?"

where the first two lines in each verse is a question, and the last two lines a reply. A person under ordinary circumstances would not answer his own question, otherwise he need not ask the question. Why, therefore, should not the effect of this query and reply be conveyed to the heart in song?

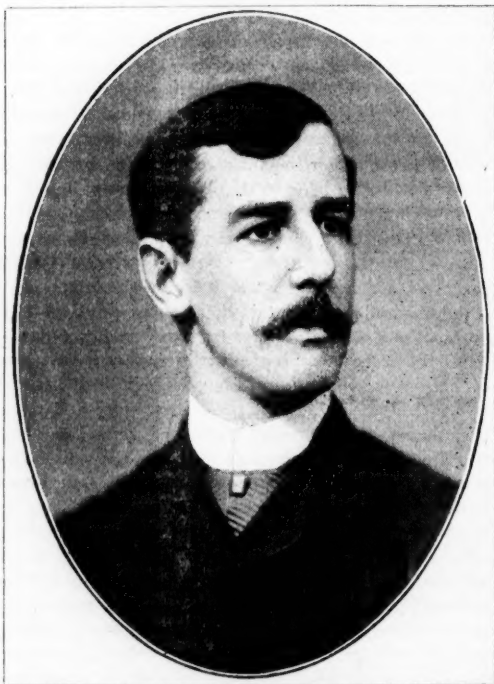
Such treatment as this makes the most inattentive worshipper notice what is being sung. He instantly turns to his book to see why one part is so soft and another so loud, and he thus has the truth placed before him in a new light. However much attention we give

to the music, we must give even greater attention to the words, if we hope to reach the hearts of the congregation. Unless this be done our music becomes a performance, and we fail to grasp an opportunity for accomplishing real spiritual work.

I would earnestly urge every church to make the music as good and as perfect as possible. The standard of the music should be regulated by the abilities of the choir. If the choir can properly render music not usually found in the books compiled for church use—in the way of anthems for instance—my opinion is that such music should be sung *to* the congregation rather than *by* them. Some of the congregation may object to this because they cannot join in. To such I would always put the question, "Do you attend the choir practices with the view of learning these pieces?" If they do, and they maintain that they cannot thus learn them, then I will admit that from their point of view—which, however, is not a complete view—they may have at least *some* ground for objection. But if they do NOT attend the rehearsals (and I am sorry to say that very few of the congregation ever do), then I maintain that if they will not *prepare* to take their part in the service of the sanctuary they have no right to dictate to those who do. The question simply is this: "Is the music of the church to be reduced to the level of those who never attend a practice, and whose musical knowledge is extremely limited?—or is it to be raised to the level of those who give their services to the church, and who regularly attend the weekly practices?" What should we say of a schoolmaster who never went beyond the alphabet because some of his pupils had not thoroughly mastered it, though the diligent ones were prepared to spell words of three, four, or five syllables? That is a precisely similar case. If people will not take the trouble to learn, the blame is on their own shoulders, and they must not complain of people who are more diligent than themselves, and who ask for music equal to their abilities and culture.

It would be a great help to Church music if every member of every choir was fully impressed with the importance of the work he or she undertakes. We should remember it is a sacred work requiring enthusiastic devotion. Looking at it from merely an artistic standpoint—ignoring the religious considerations altogether—the duties should be undertaken only by those who are prepared to make considerable self-sacrifices in the cause. But when we consider that our services are given to the Church of Christ, our very best efforts should be rendered with the utmost zeal, and with a sincere desire to make the services of the Church as perfect and as attractive as possible. If we thus attack our work and throw our whole soul into it—though we may sometimes doubt whether our labours are not in vain—we shall at some future time have the satisfaction of knowing that we have to some degree brightened homes that knew nothing but darkness, and that we have been instrumental in leading people to make melody in their hearts in this life, and in preparing them to take their part in that sublime chorus of Eternity: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. . . . Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever."

Music at Cavendish Street Chapel, Manchester.



THERE are few places of worship better known—in the north of England, at least—than "Cavendish." Here Dr. Parker was pastor for many years, until he was called to his large and important sphere of labour in London. The Rev. Paxton Hood also passed an eventful period of his life in connection with this church. He was succeeded by the Rev. W. J. Woods, who resigned a short time ago. The present pastor is the Rev. G. S. Reaney, who is just recovering from a severe illness which has incapacitated him from his pulpit duties for some time.

At six o'clock one Sunday evening early in May we arrived at the above place of worship. The whole premises are decidedly extensive, stone-built, in the early Gothic style, with a rather lofty spire. The proverbial smoky and foggy atmosphere of "Cottonopolis" has made, we fear, an indelible impression upon it, giving quite a sombre and venerable appearance to the edifice. The doors being open, we entered by the front, and must confess to a feeling of surprise at the view from the vestibule door. The church is large and lofty, having three aisles. It is cruciform in shape, the nave being five bays long with finely grouped pillars of dressed stone. The organ occupies a recessed gallery behind the pulpit, and has an elaborate front, resplendent with gold and colours. On ascending to the organ gallery we found that we had been admiring a screen only, which served to hide an instrument which is out of date and keeping with this large church and modern

requirements. The organ was built by Gray & Davison forty years ago, and contains thirteen stops on the great, eight on the swell, to tenor C only, and one pedal stop of sixteen feet open wood. There are two or three clumsy wooden composition pedals which seem exhausted by their long service; and registering necessitates very considerable agility on the part of the performer, as he has to work the stops with his hands. The reeds are done; the flue work is sweet but of small scale. As may be supposed, there is plenty of mutation work, and the organ, in less competent hands, would be little better than a box of whistles. But this church is fortunate in having a young, but clever, organist, Mr. Charles Harry Fogg, whose portrait we give herewith. In addition to this appointment, he has the honour of being organist to Sir Charles Hallé. No doubt Mr. Fogg enjoys the change to the large four-manual instrument in the Free Trade Hall.

We were shown to seats in the centre of the nave, and shortly afterwards the organist commenced playing the introductory voluntary, which was the Adagio from the first sonata by Mendelssohn. This was extremely appropriate, and was played in a beautiful *legato* manner by Mr. Fogg, the registering being most tasteful. We next had a sanctus by Camidge. This was out of a book entitled the "Cavendish Chant Book" (or Psalter), which I observed contains only one more sanctus: viz. "The Lord is in His Holy Temple." Is it possible that these are used, morning and evening, throughout the year? The sanctus seemed to be well known, as all the people joined in singing it. There was no attempt at expression beyond that given by the organ. This was followed by Our Lord's Prayer, in monotone, by the *choir alone*, the Amen being sung in harmony. Why the choir only? Is this an unwelcome act of public worship unwillingly conceded? How much better it would have been if the people had all joined, like one voice, with a fine swelling Amen at the end!

The first hymn was "Saviour, blessed Saviour," to the tune *Ramoth*. This was cheerfully and heartily sung by all, the part-singing by the choir being good; the attention to light and shade was also creditable, Mr. Fogg making effective use of the organ. After the first lesson we had a psalm, chanted to music by one of the old cathedral writers, Boyce or Crotch. This was not very commendable, owing in a great measure to defective pointing. The words, "They that go down to the sea in ships," came in, but any attempt to impart colour with such inadequate means in the way of organ tone must of necessity be next to futile. In our opinion the chanting was rather too slow. Following the second lesson, we had an anthem, "O Lamb of God," from Gounod's "Messe Solenne." This was most enjoyable, being very carefully sung, as regards both time and expression, the choir and organ moving together with nice precision. We should have preferred hearing the choir, *alone*, sing this anthem, but the congregation joined to some extent. There was a young man to our right who attempted the bass part; but he was a long way off the mark. The question

flashed through our mind, "Why do the people here sing this excerpt from a Mass by Gounod and not join in Our Lord's Prayer?" After the long prayer we had another hymn, sung to the well-known tune by Luther, but the setting was high and somewhat fatiguing, consequently the volume of singing gradually fell off. Mr. Fogg continued playing for a short time after the hymn was finished, using the soft stops with good effect. After the sermon came the final hymn, sung to a tune in which the congregation took little or no part. The Amen was sung at the close of the last verse. I think this choir could give a nice rendering of Stainer's sevenfold Amen at the end of the Benediction. The service was brought to a close by Mr. Fogg playing a "Grande Chœur" by Salomé, and we could not help deploring that he should have such an antiquated instrument to play upon. The church really ought to move in the matter, and provide him with an organ replete with modern effects, and more in keeping with his abilities and position in the musical world.

The choir numbered twenty-one voices. We expected more, but perhaps the thunder shower at church-time kept some away. No doubt the same circumstance affected the general attendance, as the congregation was far from being a large one, more apparent, perhaps, from the fact that the church has rather extensive galleries, in addition to ample accommodation on the ground floor. The interior looks somewhat dingy at present, and would be all the better if placed in the hands of a decorator. This church is well situated for work, in a densely populated neighbourhood; and no doubt when Mr. Reaney resumes his active duties, supplemented by the much appreciated labours of his partner in life, the influence of the cause here will be duly felt.

Organ Voluntaries.

By ARTHUR BAYLISS.

ALTHOUGH much has been done during the last few years to improve the music in our Nonconformist Churches and Chapels, one must acknowledge that a great deal remains yet to be done before the state of perfection be reached. In this short paper I propose dealing with the portion of the musical service termed the Voluntary, in the hope that a greater interest may be taken in this important part of our worship music. Although there are some (very few I hope) people who would be glad if there were no such thing as a voluntary, yet the majority of our congregations like it, and would be sorry were it abolished.

The Introductory Voluntary should be of a soothing character, likely to prepare the mind of the listener for the service which follows it. It is not at all difficult to select music of this description, as the catalogues of most publishers abound in pieces composed by our leading organists, likely to suit every purpose. This portion of the service happens to be the one which generally receives the greatest amount of attention

from the organist, and it is a great pity that the voluntary, to a certain extent, covers the incoming and outgoing of the congregation, as the intended effect is often lost. This is most discouraging to the player, and unless inspired by a high sense of his duty as leader (or co-leader) in the Service of Praise may cause him to play just for the sake of hiding the noise; but he must remember that there are some in every congregation who love the sound of the organ, and delight to hear organ-music, and his careless manner of playing the Opening Voluntary may unfit them for the rest of the service. Every piece must therefore be well-prepared, and the time it takes to play it be ascertained, as it is very objectionable to hear a piece curtailed long before the end is reached; and the effect produced is just as bad if a series of chords are played after the final cadence. In some churches, however, unpunctuality on the part of the minister and deacons makes it impossible to avoid this. In this case it is far better to start a fresh piece in some related key than to ramble through meaningless chords for an indefinite time. Music which has been written for the organ, should, as a rule, be used for soft voluntaries, but there can be no objection to the sacred airs from oratorios—for instance, "But the Lord is mindful," "He shall feed His flock," and others of a similar type—being sometimes used.

If a collection is taken during the service it is customary for the organ to be played while this is going on. Music written for the soft stops is best for this purpose, as anything of a striking nature is apt to remove the effect produced by the sermon. The organist will soon know how long it takes to collect the offerings, and will, of course, select a piece which takes about that time to play.

The Concluding Voluntary is, without doubt, that requiring the most work on the part of the organist. As in the case of the Opening Voluntary, music specially written for the organ is preferable if dignified in character, but a pleasant change may be made by occasionally introducing one of the choruses from the works of Handel, Haydn, Beethoven, etc.

The organ music of Bach and Mendelssohn makes capital voluntaries if well played. Congregations will, however, soon tire, even of Bach, and the organist must be careful not to give them too much of that composer's music. The young organist will find it a good plan to arrange for his voluntaries at the beginning of each month, as he will then be able to arrange music in different styles for each service, and will save himself a lot of trouble at the very last moment. Care must be taken not to play much music in March form (as great an error as playing too much Bach); a judicious mixture must be made, and care must be taken not to get into any "ruts." Of course, at festival seasons, music of a more brilliant character may be substituted, and, for the matter of that, after any sermon of a joyful character, providing that the selection is in good taste, as every part of the service should be. A high standard of excellence must always be aimed at, remembering that it is a great privilege to be a Leader of Praise in the Sanctuary, and that the work must not be done in a slovenly, half-hearted way, but must be the best that can be rendered.

Hymn Tune Competition.

WE received thirty-six tunes to the hymn "I think when I read that sweet story of old," for the competition we announced in our April issue. That the verdict might be thoroughly impartial, we thought it best to submit the tunes to some well-known musician, without giving him the names of the composers, but simply numbering the MSS. We therefore handed them to Dr. E. J. Hopkins—a very high authority—who very kindly undertook to adjudicate on the compositions. His opinion is given as follows:—

"DEAR MR. MINSHALL,

"I have carefully looked through the thirty-six MS. Hymn Tunes you sent me,—some of them repeatedly.

"I first reduced the number to ten, then to three,—Nos. 12, 18, and 24,—and lastly decided on No. 18.

"Would not the latter suit children's voices better if set in A instead of G ?

"With kind regards,

"Yours ever sincerely,

"E. J. HOPKINS."

No. 12 is by H. E. B. (Portland Street), W. ; No. 24 is by W. J. R. (Highbury) ; and No. 18 is by

MR. ARTHUR BERRIDGE,

41, HUDDLESTON ROAD,
LONDON, N.,

to whom we have sent a cheque for One Guinea.

We entirely agree with Dr. Hopkins's suggestion that it would be better to set the tune in A, but we print it as sent in.

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HUDDLESTON.

ARTHUR BERRIDGE.

I think when I read that sweet sto - ry of old, When Je - sus was here a - mong men ;

How He called lit - tle chil - dren like lambs to His fold— I should liked to have been with them then !

I wish that His hands had been placed on my head, That His arms had been thrown a - round me ;

And that I might have seen His kind look when He said, " Let the lit - tle ones come un - to Me ! " '.

Origin of Hymns.

THE old hymns and hymn tunes generally, were composed for special occasions, or brought out by some incident in the writer's life or events of his time. Most of the good and lasting ones have thus been brought out. Would that some of the book-makers of the present day could take cognizance of this fact! for it is a cogent truth against the wholesale manufacturing of tunes, tune books, and in fact musical publications of every description, with which the market is at the present day being flooded. The thing is going so far that persons are engaged to sit down and make a book; grind out one to order. The fact is that many of the platitudes printed between two covers, and freely advertised by the publishers and also by the authors themselves, do not deserve the name of hymns and musical settings. Of the really fine hymns the number is comparatively small, and most of them bear the stamp of the writer's experience, or are an expression of his individual longing, aspiration, or praise. "Nearer, my God, to Thee," in its varied pictures of sorrow, could only have been the outcome of a real experience. How this may be we have no means of knowing, but think it must have been so. Heber wrote his missionary hymn one Saturday night under the influence of feelings stirred by missionary zeal. It was sung the next morning to a popular sailor air known as "Twas when the sea was roaring." Watts complained to his father that the psalmody of the Church was not good. "Make it better, my son," was all the consolation he got; and by the next morning he had written one of his best hymns, and this was followed by others: he *did* make the psalmody of his day better. Kirke White wrote, "When, marshalled on the nightly plain" when rowing in an open boat on a small inlet one dark night. Many more cases might be cited to illustrate this matter, but these are enough to show that hymns, songs, and tunes, "written especially for this work," are generally a vanity and a delusion. Flint and steel must meet to bring fire, and the rubbing of paper currency over leaden plates gives little else than noise and emptiness.

Reasons for Learning to Sing.

THE following extract from Dr. William Byrd's quaint preface to his collections of "Psalms, Sonnets and Songs of Sadnesse and Pietie," published in 1598, is one of undoubted interest, and its mingled wit and wisdom render it worthy of note by all who are not already acquainted with the great Elizabethan musician's curious volume.

"Reasons brieflie set down by the auctor to persuade everie one to learn to sing.

"1. It is a knowledge easilie taught and quicklie learned, when there is a good master and an apt scholar.

"2. The exercise of singing is delightful to nature, and good to preserve the health of man.

"3. It doth strengthen all parts of the heart, and doth open the pipes.

"4. It is a singular good remedie for a stuttering and stammering in the speech.

"5. It is the best way to preserve a perfect pronunciation, and to make a good orator.

"6. It is the only way to know where nature hath bestowed the benefit of a good voyce, which gift is so rare that there is not one among a thousand that hath it; and, in manie, that excellent gift is lost because they want an art to express nature.

"7. There is not any musicke of instruments whatsoever, comparable to that which is made of the voyces of

men, where the voyces are good, and the same well sorted and ordered.

"8. The better the voyce is, the meeter it is to honour and serve God therewith; and the voyce of man is chiefly to be employed to that end. *Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum.*"

"Since singing is so good a thing,
I wish all men would learn to sing."

Inquiry Column.

As previously intimated, we now devote space for the purpose of enabling our readers to procure information upon subjects that come within the scope of the JOURNAL. Questions sent to us shall appear, and we shall be glad to receive replies, which shall appear the following month. We cannot undertake to answer the questions ourselves, the intention being that this column should be devoted to the interchange of opinion. Questions and replies (*written on one side of the paper only*) should reach us not later than the 20th of the month.

QUESTIONS.

(23) FLOWER-SERVICE ANTHEM.

Can anyone suggest a good anthem suitable for a Flower Service?—VIOLET.

(24) ORGAN ARRANGEMENTS.

I want to get a volume containing some good arrangements of well known airs from the Oratorios and from the Sonatas, Symphonies, etc., of Beethoven and other great masters. Will some organist tell me whose arrangements are the best?—YOUNGSTER.

(25) DEPUTIES FOR CHOIR MEMBERS.

I am advised to adopt a system of having deputies ready to take the place of any members of my choir who may happen to be absent. I should like to know how this plan works where it has been tried, and also how I had better start it.—A. L. C.

(26) SERVICE OF SONG.

The music in most Services of Song is nothing more than ordinary hymns. I want one with better and more difficult music. Will some reader suggest one?—X.

(27) CHANTING HYMNS.

In singing hymns to chants, should the words which are sung to the reciting note be sung at quick reading pace and stops observed as in ordinary chanting, or sung in measured time—a beat for every syllable?—NOVICE.

ANSWERS.

(17) HYMN-ANTHEMS.

No. 534, *Musical Times*, is partly so, and is composed by Rev. H. H. Woodward. Nos. 368, 495, and 554, *Musical Times*, are entirely so, and No. 50 in the "Congregational Church Hymnal" (Anthem part) is exquisitely set by J. Barnby to "Abide with me."—WILLIAM PRENTICE.

(18) HOW TO COMMENCE A TUNE.

I have tried several methods, but I am convinced that the most satisfactory method is to play the treble note alone for an instant before sounding the full chord. At one time I used to begin with the full chord, but I found that the congregation did not join in promptly.—OLD STAGER.

(19) CHANTING.

Properly speaking every comma should be observed, but occasionally, when a comma comes after two or three words in succession, it is advisable to discard some of them. For instance, in the following: "For Thou, Lord, art high above all the earth," I discard the first comma; I found that to observe both made the chanting choppy.—CHOIRMASTER.

Yes, a distinct stop must be made at every comma as in good reading.—J. T.

(20) BACH'S FUGUE.

I think "C. J. P." will find Dr. Bridge's new edition (published by Novello & Co.) the best for him.—A. Z. Peters's edition, to be got at Augener's.—C. T.

(21) COMPASS OF VOICES.

Soprano from C to F[♯], contralto from A to E, tenor from E to G, bass from G to E.—COMPOSER.

"Query" in writing psalm tunes must remember that he is not writing for trained voices, but for ordinary voices, as found in most congregations. The treble should not go higher than E, the contralto than C, tenor than F sharp, and bass than D.—F. C. G.

(22) NEW ORGAN.

"Clericus" had better consult a well qualified organist, and get him to prepare a specification of an organ suitable for his church. This should be submitted to builders for estimates, and the organist's opinion on those estimates should be accepted.—F. T.

I should advise "Clericus" to go to a first-rate organ builder, tell him how much he can afford to spend on an organ, and let the builder do the best he can for the money.—C. E.

Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

METROPOLITAN.

CITY TEMPLE.—On May 16th, a most successful concert was given by the City Temple choir, on behalf of the funds of the Cricket Club connected with the Church. The two choruses and two part songs were sung with much precision and attention to expression. Solos were well rendered by Mrs. Parker, Miss Kaines, Miss Lily Johnson, Miss Ashley, Mr. Alexander Tucker, Mr. W. Doble, Mr. J. T. Taylor, and Mr. George Tidy. Duets were sung by Miss Blaxter and Miss Violetta Eaton, and by Messrs. Doble and Tucker. Miss Edith M. Shaw played two pianoforte solos, and Mr. Minshall one organ solo. The audience (numbering nearly two thousand) were very appreciative, and applauded all the performers very heartily. This was the 272nd of the Thursday evening concerts and was the last of the Season.

ILFORD.—The chorus and band of the Vocal Union (the latter with professional assistance) gave a performance of sacred music in the Reading Room on Good Friday. The programme included Mozart's "First Mass," Gounod's "By Babylon's Wave," and Haydn's "Inanae et Vanæ curæ," ("Distracted with care"). Soloists: Madame Eugenia Morgan, Miss Carrie Curnow, Mr. Henry Mason, and Mr. Hilton Carter. Leader: Miss Eva Haynes. Conductor: Mr. A. Storr, A. Mus. T.C.L.

ISLINGTON.—On Wednesday, May 8th, Union Chapel was well filled to hear the Psalmody Class perform Handel's "Joshua," a work that is rarely heard. The principals were: Miss Marianne Fenna, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mr. Henry Piercy, and Mr. W. H. Brereton, all of whom sang the music allotted to them with their well-known ability. Miss Hilda Wilson, however, carried off the honours of the evening, being in excellent voice. The choruses throughout were well rendered, though the treble might with advantage have been a little stronger. Mr. Williamson conducted, and to Mr. Fountain Mear great credit is due for his judicious and painstaking accompaniments.

PECKHAM.—An excellent performance of the "Messiah" was given at the Clifton Congregational Church, Asylum Road, on Thursday evening, April 25th. The band and chorus numbered 150, and Mrs. Frank L. Taylor, presided at the organ in her usually skilful manner, the whole being ably conducted by Mr. Thomas S. Wyard. The soloists were Madame Riechelmann, Madame Joyce Maas, Mr. J. H. Mullerhausen, and Mr. W. G. Hazlegrove, who creditably sustained the parts allotted to them. The choruses were all admirably rendered, the voices blending with beautiful effect. The performance was in every respect a great success, and reflects great credit on all concerned. The proceeds were devoted to the church funds, and judging from the large audience present, we should think the same were materially increased.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—A performance of Handel's oratorio "Saul" was given by the Psalmody Association of the Presbyterian Church on Thursday, May 2nd. Miss Anna Williams, Miss Dora Barnard, Mr. Iver McKay, and Mr. W. G. Farington sang the principal recitatives and solos with artistic expression and genuine dramatic feeling, while the choir of about fifty voices gave a good account of the splendid choruses, and showed a marked advance on their previous efforts in classical music. Mr. J. E. Burland, organist of Park Church, Highbury, accompanied on the organ, and Mr. J. B. Shaw conducted.

STRATFORD.—The organ in the Congregational Church (the Rev. J. Knaggs) is being entirely rebuilt and revoiced by Mr. F. A. Slater, of Bow, London, E.

PROVINCIAL.

ABERDARE.—The "Cymanfa Ganu" for the Aberdare Valley was held at Calfaria Chapel, which, failed to accommodate the hundreds who attended. Mr. Theo. Jenkins acted as conductor.

ANSTY.—A new American organ has been purchased for the Congregational Chapel at a cost of £50, which sum has been raised within £10.

BATLEY.—On Sunday last, April 28th, after a shortened evening service, a service of song was given by the choir, in Soothill Congregational Chapel entitled "The Battle of Life." The music—which was the most interesting part of the service—was efficiently rendered by the choir. The Rev. C. C. Edwards gave the connective readings. There was a good congregation.

BOLTON.—The Sunday School Anniversary Sermons, in connection with St. George's Road Congregational Church, were preached on Sunday the 19th of May, by the Rev. W. H. Davidson of London, a former pastor of the Church. The anthem in the morning was Attwood's "Teach me, O Lord," and in the evening, Sullivan's "Hearken unto Me, My

people." In the afternoon an excellent and effective rendering of Dr. Langdon Colborne's sacred cantata "Samuel" was given by the choir and scholars. The work is exceedingly well adapted for occasions of this kind, and was listened to throughout with the closest attention, and was evidently received with pleasure and appreciation by the large congregation present. The solos were in the competent hands of Mrs. Barben and Miss Farrington (sopranos), Miss Bentley (contralto), and Messrs. Topping and Brierley (tenor and bass). Mr. Barben, the organist and choirmaster of the church, under whose direction the work was produced, also presided at the organ. There were large congregations at each service, and the collections amounted to £105 10s. 6d.

BRIDGNORTH.—On Sunday, May 12th, the Sunday School anniversary sermons of the Wesleyan Chapel, were preached by the Rev. Josiah Tollady, of Walsall. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, large and attentive congregations gathered to hear the rev. gentleman, the chapel in the evening being crowded in every part. The singing of the children was very excellent throughout, notably Cowen's "Better Land," arranged as a chorus by a local musician; and Hopkins' beautiful anthem "Lift up your heads." Mr. Dan Broadbent presided at the harmonium, and Mr. Tom Broadbent officiated as conductor, and by the excellence of the singing, there can be no doubt as to the thorough and efficient manner in which they have performed their respective duties.

BUCKINGHAM.—On Thursday, May 2nd, a new organ was formally opened in the Wesleyan Chapel, by an excellent recital by Mr. A. F. Kerry, B.A., of Exeter College, and organist of the Wesley Memorial Chapel, Oxford. Before commencing the recital, the Rev. Mark Symons addressed a few words to those present, and after a short prayer the programme was executed by the organist in a masterly style, and greatly delighted the good attendance. Between the pieces, Miss Haygarth sang, "Oh, rest in the Lord" most sweetly, and Mr. W. H. Walford also rendered "The King of Love my Shepherd is" (Gounod), in a capital style. The organ is certainly of sweet tone, and does the builder, Mr. F. A. Slater, of Bow, London, great credit.

BURNLEY.—On Sunday, April 28th, in the Hull Street Mission Room, the Fulledge Sunday School Choir rendered a service of song, entitled "Messiah's Sceptre," to a crowded audience. The soprano solos were given in very good style by Miss F. S. Landless. Conductor: Mr. A. R. Pickles; accompanist: Mr. J. T. Howarth.

CANTERBURY.—On Thursday May 9th, a service of praise was held in the Wesleyan Chapel. The Rev. R. Davidson, M.A., read the Scriptures and offered prayer, and Stainer's "Daughter of Jairus" and Mendelssohn's "Thirteenth Psalm" were performed. The solo parts in "The Daughter of Jairus" were well rendered by Misses Blogg, Collins, and Finch, and Messrs. Fricker and C. Taylor; and Miss Helen Muirhead sang the solo parts in the "Psalm" in splendid style. The Wesleyan choir was assisted by members of the Countess of Huntingdon and Baptist Choirs, and the chorus numbered about eighty voices. The accompaniments were well played by a string band, and Mr. Walker (of Dover) presided at the organ. Mr. S. Walker, organist of the chapel, conducted in a most efficient manner.

CHATHAM.—After ten years' service, Mr. T. R. Douse has resigned the position of organist and choirmaster to the Congregational Church, Chatham. This is considered to be a great loss to the church,

and district, as Mr. Douse took an exceptional interest in the cause of music, particularly in relation to the church. At the time Mr. Douse was appointed an old G organ was in the church, but the executive had no peace until this was replaced by a fine three-manual instrument, built by Peter Conacher & Co., of Huddersfield, and the whole church entirely renovated at a cost of nearly £2,000. After these alterations the choir was reorganized, frequent anthems, solos, etc., were introduced into the Sunday services, to the delight of all; and occasionally Sunday evening choral services were held, in which the congregation took considerable part. Concerts and organ recitals were frequent during the winter months. An important feature of Mr. Douse's influence was the marked improvement in the song-worship of the Sunday schools. Among other testimonials received by Mr. Douse from the various societies in connection with the church, was a very handsome travelling dressing case, subscribed for by the members of the choir.

CULCHETH, NEWTON HEATH.—In connection with the school anniversary, a new cantata entitled "Laus Deo," was given on Sunday, May 12th, for the first time. It is by the same composer as "The Better Country"—Mr. Thomas Pollitt. The remarkably fine rendering of a contralto solo, by Mrs. Allen, and the soprano part in a duet, was greatly appreciated, and gave this lady an opportunity of proving that she possesses a voice both sweet and strong, as well as of great range. The other solo parts were taken by Miss Etchells, Miss Evans, Mr. B. Wilde, and Mr. E. Trevor. Mr. W. D. Bailey deserves a word of praise for the able manner in which he accompanied on the organ. Mr. Pollitt himself conducted.

EDINBURGH.—Speaking at a recital of sacred music in St. George's Free Church, Professor Bruce said he had often been struck by the barbarous character of the music used in their churches, and he hoped that the collection of anthems which was being prepared by the Praise Committee would improve the standard of musical execution.

EGHAM.—A sacred concert admirably arranged by Mr. Sidney James, organist of the church, was given in the Congregational Church at Egham Hill, on Good Friday. The instrumentalists were: Miss Goodman (piano), Mr. F. D. Morford (violin), Mr. Silver, of St. George's Chapel Royal (violoncello), and Mr. S. Janes (organ). Their selections were effectively rendered, and as much can certainly be said for the anthems in the programme, which were given by a choir of about twenty, composed of members of the Church choir and a few friends of good musical ability. The programme was as follows: instrumental solo; anthem, "Behold, how good and joyful!" the choir; song, "The Light of Life," Miss H. Gubbins; song, "Waft her, Angels," Mr. Garne; song, "Angels ever bright and fair," Miss N. Oades; instrumental march and chorus, "Jewish Warriors" (encored), the choir; song, "The Star of Bethlehem" (encored), Mr. S. Morford; song, "The Battle Prayer," Mr. W. Lucas; song, "The Children's Kingdom," Miss Jakob; instrumental trio, "Cujus Animam," song, "For ever with the Lord," Mr. Goldsmith; song, "Light in darkness," Miss N. Oades; instrumental trio, "Largo," song, "The King of Love," Miss S. Morford; song, "Calvary," Miss H. Gubbins; anthem, "Sons of Zion," the choir. No charge was made for admission, but during the concert a collection was made in aid of the Sunday School fund, and it realized £3 15s.

GREENHEYS.—On Sunday evening, April 28th, there was a very enjoyable Musical Service at the Congregational Church. Choruses from the "Messiah" and from "Christ and His Soldiers," were sung by the choir; and solos from the same works, and also one by Gounod, were well rendered by Mrs. Wastbury, Mrs. Sussum, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Ashton, and Mr. W. J. Pendlebury. Mr. G. A. Blackwin presided at the organ. All the music had reference to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. An address was given by Rev. James Clough.

FROME.—On Good Friday evening a large number of people assembled in Wesley Chapel, to hear a performance of the "Stabat Mater" and selections from the "Messiah." It was to the enterprise of Mr. T. Grant that they were indebted for the treat they enjoyed, and we sincerely trust that Mr. Grant will not be allowed to be a loser by the undertaking. The instrumentalists were: Violins, Mr. E. Cox, and Herr Heinrich (leaders), and Mr. Millington; viola, Mr. Wetten; violoncellos, Mr. Saltar; contra bass, Mr. G. Bourke; flute, Mr. J. G. Broom; clarinet, Herr E. Kopp; trumpet, Signor Bossi; trombone, Mr. Winkworth; drums, etc., Mr. T. Head; organist, Mr. H. Millington. The following were the principal vocalists:—Miss E. Walton, of the London concerts; Miss Flora Edwards, of the St. James's Hall and principal London concerts; Mr. S. Boyce Creak, solo tenor Bristol Cathedral; Mr. D. Harrison, principal bass Lichfield Cathedral, all of whom acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of the audience. The service was thoroughly enjoyed by all present, and to Mr. Grant, who conducted, we offer our congratulations, and we hope that the service will prove as successful financially as it was musically.

HARLESTONE.—A sacred cantata, "The Lion of Judah," was performed at the Baptist Chapel, and a collection was taken in reduction of the chapel debt.

HORNSEA.—The usual Easter musical service in the Congregational Church took place on Easter Sunday afternoon, when there was a crowded congregation. The anthems were: "O death, where is thy sting?" (A. H. Brown), "Christ is risen" (Goss), "The Lord is my Strength" (Monk), and "Break forth into joy" (Barnby); and they were admirably rendered by the choir. Solos from the "Messiah" were sung by Miss Ethel Holmes ("I know that my Redeemer liveth"), Miss Burn ("But Thou didst not leave"), and Mr. Gibson ("Why do the nations?"), and in each case were these pieces remarkably well sung, Miss Holmes' solo being specially marked by finished and sympathetic execution. Several of the well-known Easter hymns were sung, the congregation joining in most heartily, and the service was as bright and interesting as could be desired. Mr. Clark Morrison presided at the organ, although Mr. T. B. Holmes, J.P., played the accompaniment for his daughter, and a voluntary whilst the offertory was being taken. Mr. T. B. Holmes, jun., also rendered valuable aid with his violin. The pastor (the Rev. D. T. Evans, M.A.) presided. The offertory, which was in aid of the organ fund, was considerably in advance of last year. The choir-master, Mr. W. Gibson, is to be congratulated upon the admirable manner in which the choir sang throughout.

KENILWORTH.—Mr. Henry R. Skutt, for four years organist of Abbey Hill Church, on leaving for Minnesota has been presented with a silver watch and chain, in appreciation of his services.

LEICESTER.—A new organ has recently been erected in the Baptist Chapel at Countesthorpe. (Rev. E. Yemm, pastor.)

LITTLEBOROUGH.—A new organ has been opened in the United Methodist Free Chapel, Rev. A. Hollday and others taking part in the inaugural services, a recital being given by Mr. W. H. Jude, of Liverpool. It has been erected at a cost of £650, towards which £450 has been raised.

LOUGHBOROUGH.—Mr. E. A. Jarratt, for many years organist of the Congregational Church, has, on the occasion of his marriage to Miss M. Bailey, an active worker in the Sunday School, been presented by the members with silver flower vases, sugar sifter, and bread fork.—The second annual performance of the "Messiah" was given in the United Methodist Free Chapel on Good Friday, before a large congregation. Mr. John Smith, choir-master, conducted; the choir was reinforced from the other chapels of the town, and assisted by an orchestral band.

LIVERPOOL.—The ninth annual psalmody, under the auspices of the Congregational Singing Union in connection with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists of Liverpool and district, recently took place in Hengler's Circus, which, as on previous occasions was crowded to the doors. For the past six months, the choirs of the different chapels had been rehearsing the hymns selected, and on Monday evening the orchestra was occupied by between 700 and 800 ladies and gentlemen representing the respective chapels in the district. In the absence, through family bereavement, of Mr. John Roberts, M.P., the chair was taken by Mr. John Edwards, precentor of Princes Road Chapel, and Chairman of the Union. The hymns sung were taken from the hymn books in use by the Methodist body, and the combined choirs, under the conductorship of Mr. John Thomas, of Llanwrtyd, joined by the vast congregation, went through the programme with remarkable heartiness and effect. Great interest was manifested in the anthem, "Teyrnasoedd y ddaear" (J. Ambrose Lloyd), which was rendered by the choir with harmony and precision. In an interval, a short address was given by the Rev. E. J. Evans, of Walton, upon the aims and object of the Union. The complete success of the festival was largely due to the efforts of the secretary, Mr. James Venmore, who superintended the arrangements with every satisfaction. Mr. Kerfoot Jones gave efficient assistance at the harmonium.

LUTON.—The Sunday School festival, which took place on 12th and 13th ult. at the Chapel St. Chapel, proved to be a grand success. About 1,000 of the young people were trained to sing with marvellous expression and attack. The programme included selections from the oratorios and other standard music. The soloists were: Miss Maud Harding, R.A.M., Miss Kate Parking, Mr. A. Puddephutt; organist: Mr. A. D. Farmer, R.A.M.; conductor: Mr. Sidney Bennett.

MORLEY.—On Sunday evening, April 28th, the sacred cantata, entitled "The Daughter of Jairus," was admirably rendered in St. Mary's Congregational Church, by the choir. There was a very large congregation.

NEWPORT, MON.—On Wednesday evening, May 1st, the Commercial Street Baptist Musical Society gave a complimentary concert to Mr. C. B. Bumstead, A.T.C.L., in recognition of his services as conductor during the past session. There was a large and fashionable

attendance, and a most interesting programme had been arranged, including choruses, part songs for ladies' voices, Orpheus glees, etc., besides vocal and instrumental solos. The soloists were: Mr. F. W. Davies, Miss E. Sergeant, and Mr. A. J. Phillips, all of whom are so well known here as to need no further comment except that they one and all acquitted themselves to the full satisfaction of the audience. A duet for flute and piano, rendered by Mr. A. Williams and Mr. C. B. Bumstead, was most enthusiastically received, as also was Mr. Bumstead's pianoforte solo "Where the bee sucks" (*Benedict*). Mr. Arthur Batchelor played Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte," No. 10, with great taste. Mr. Bumstead had a very flattering reception, and both as accompanist, solo pianist, and conductor, showed himself thoroughly at home with his work.

ST. AUSTELL.—A bazaar in aid of the new organ fund, held at the Congregational Church (Rev. W. Boulter, pastor), recently realized £165.

SHEFFIELD.—Rev. Joseph Bush, President of Conference, preached at the Highfield Wesleyan Chapel, in connection with the new organ, which has been erected at a cost of £520.

SOUTHEND.—The organ in the Congregational Church is being enlarged by Mr. F. A. Slater of Bow, London, E.

SYDENHAM.—The last of a series of concerts in connection with the Wesleyan Chapel, was held in the Schoolroom, which was crowded. The programme opened with "Sleigh Bells" (pianoforte), Misses K. and F. Checcucci; Miss Ashby sang "A Summer Shower;" Miss Hayward sang "The Vesper Hour," which was extremely well rendered and received; Miss Workman sang "Great-grandmother" and "Fine Feathers;" Miss Checcucci sang "The Chorister;" the Misses Mary and Alice Bench sang "Robin," a duet, which was encored. The choir sang a part song, "England yet," with force and precision. Mr. Christmas sang "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep." A recitation by Mr. Halifax, entitled "The New Tale of a Tub," was loudly applauded. Miss Elsie Page (a young lady of nine years of age) gave a pianoforte solo, "Loch Lomond," which received an encore. Miss M. Brown sang "The Kissing Bridge;" Miss J. Mann sang "All-halloween." The Messrs. Brown and Mann sang a duet, "Life's Dream is o'er;" Mr. W. Douthwaite recited "Valentine," in the Yorkshire brogue, which excited much amusement, and Mr. H. Blackmore sang "King's Own." Miss Kate Mann and Mr. A. J. Pettengill (organist of the chapel) acted as accompanists. Altogether a very pleasant and successful evening was spent. The collection amounted to £4 6s. 9d.

WELLINGBOROUGH.—The Good Friday evening concert at the Congregational Church was given by the choir, assisted by friends from Kettering. Selections were taken from the Festival Book to be used at the Crystal Palace on June 1st, and were sung with great taste and expression. The chief items were:—Anthem, "A day in Thy courts;" "Ye shall dwell in the land;" Magnificat, Bunnett; "And the glory of the Lord;" "I will magnify Thee;" "How lovely are the Messengers!" Part Song, "Christian Pilgrims." Solos etc. were also sung by Miss Tirrell, Mr. Jas. Heygate, Mr. W. Goodey, and Mr. J. Robinson. Mr. Mark Douglas presided at the organ; Mr. Samson Tipson, organist and choir-master of the Congregational Church conducted. Mr. Samson Tipson gave a rendering of Bach's E♭ Fugue (*St. Ann's*) during the evening.

WHITSTABLE.—An organ is about to be placed in the Congregational Church (Rev. C. N. Barham, pastor).

WOKING.—On May 8th, a sacred concert was given in the Baptist Congregational Chapel here, consisting of a miscellaneous selection of vocal and instrumental items, and of Dr. Spark's cantata "Immanuel." There was a good audience, many of the principal residents of the neighbourhood being present. In the first part the principal vocal items were: Gounod's "There is a Green Hill," very expressively sung by Mdlle. Winckler; "Hear ye, Israel" ("Elijah"), by Miss Ida Le Maistre of Guildford, a very promising young vocalist; "He shall feed His Flock" and "The Gift" (Behrend), sung by Miss Schindler; and Hatton's "Consolation" by Mr. Fitzwater, of Weybridge. "Immanuel" was well rendered by a choir of forty voices, partly drawn from Christ Church choir and from Guildford, under the baton of Mr. R. Taylor. Mdlle. Winckler (soprano), Miss Schindler (contralto), Mr. A. Wright (bass), and Mr. Fitzwater (tenor), very ably rendered the solos, and Rev. E. W. Turbrox (organ), and Mr. A. Wright (piano) accompanied. The concert was given in aid of the building fund. The willing co-operation on the part of Christ Church Choir and organist, and of the Guildford friends, was a very gratifying feature in connection with the concert.

WORKSOP.—A new organ is to be erected in the Congregational Church (Rev. G. W. Bennett, pastor), at a cost of £200—£100 of which is already in hand.

Correspondence.

(We shall be glad to receive communications from any of our readers on questions likely to be of general interest.)

FROM SUNDAY SCHOOL TO CHOIR.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—Mr. Pollitt is very hard on Mr. Wright, because he complains of the leaflets published at "8d. per 100." There are leaflets and leaflets. There are some that are exceedingly good, which must surely satisfy the most exacting musician who demands high-class composition. There are also some so unmelodious and so ungrammatical that they ought to be consigned to the flames. Do not let us either praise or condemn all leaflets; each one must be judged on its merits. It is satisfactory to see so many really good compositions are now being published, and are taking the place of the rubbish that has done duty for so long.—Yours truly,

LIVERPOOL.

A. B.

RULES FOR CHOIRS.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—Some of my friends are very anxious to adopt a series of rules for my choir—enforcing regular attendance, fixing a definite seat for every member, forbidding any member to introduce a stranger into the "singing pew," assessing fines to be paid by those who break these laws. I can see advantages and disadvantages in a set of rules, but before giving a decided opinion, I should very much like to have the question discussed in your columns: Whether members of choirs should be controlled by laws, or whether we should trust to their honour to fulfil their duties to the best of their ability.—Yours truly,

LEX.

SHOULD THE ORGANIST BE CHOIR-MASTER ?

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—I think the following may be given as some of the principal reasons why the two offices should be in the hands of the organist.

1. On the whole custom sanctions it. A choirmaster is rarely found in any of the choirs of the Church of England. In the cathedral churches there is the office of precentor; but even here the work is practically confined to the selection of the music, with perhaps one or two other minor matters. The real work, such as training the choir, is invariably in the hands of the organist.

2. With the best intentions possible on both sides, it is scarcely possible to work together without more or less friction, for the simple reason that points may suddenly arise on which opinions would differ—points requiring prompt and speedy settlement even during a service.

3. There is always a tendency with any one vocalist (which the choirmaster is generally supposed to be) as leader, to have a prominent voice heard above and even before the rest of the choir. This of itself is ruinous to all true harmony and to united singing; and if the choir be properly trained there is no need for a leader—scarcely even the gentlest leading of the organ.

4. Another strong reason is, that the largest salary paid to any organist is very small compared with that of the minister or clergyman, without dividing it; especially considering the very much greater risks and insecurities which usually accompany the office than in the case of the ministers.

No doubt the subject can be much enlarged and additional reasons given. I think a still more important subject for consideration in your columns would be: The formation of a society or guild for the better definition and establishment of the organist's position and status in the Church; an improved scale of payment; the obtaining of good instruments at paying prices alike to builder and Church, which would compel the abolition of the too prevalent doctrine of the "cheapest, and leave the result;" and also for the protection of the organist against unwarrantable and unjust interference whether from internal or external sources. On the latter point I may have more to say again.

Yours truly,

J. A. GREGORY,
F. S. Sc. L. Mus. (Lond.).

SOUTHPORT.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—The question "Should the organist be also the choirmaster?" is not one which can be answered with a curt "Of course" or a prompt "Certainly not" on the one side or the other; but will, I think, receive from thoughtful persons a somewhat guarded and less dogmatic response. As one holding neither office, but having had a good deal to do with both, I will mention a few points which have to be considered in forming a correct opinion on this interesting question.

No one will dispute that the functions pertaining to these offices are quite distinct, and that the powers requisite for adequate and satisfactory performance thereof do not always coexist. There are good organists in abundance who are not so good at choir-training; and able chorus-masters who make very indifferent organists. I believe that the principle of division of labour will generally apply here—thoroughly to manipulate a good organ is almost enough to occupy the whole attention of an average organist; while there are sufficient demands made by a choir on the tact,

patience, and humanity (to say nothing of musical knowledge), of the conductor without the mechanical dexterity requisite at the same time, satisfactorily to control the "kist o' whistles." Organists are not always vocalists with sympathy for singers of but moderate talent; and some can have had but few opportunities of training themselves in the details of choirmastership.

It is about time that our Colleges and Academies of Music gave their students some facilities in the special branch of study which we may call choir training, and at which our young organists have at present few if any chances of trying their hand before obtaining an appointment. The great benefit which would accrue from some practice in handling a choir in the presence of "an old hand" will be evident at once. What chorister has not felt sorry for the young musician who, clever enough at his instrument, has clearly had no experience in conducting a chorus? And the members of the choir also deserve our sympathy while themselves being practised upon for the leader's benefit, rather than for their own.

While it is quite possible to obtain a really clever organist direct from our Academies, I am not sure that a choirmaster worthy of the name can be got easily—for reasons which will suggest themselves.

The accompanying of the singing in our Church services is, I think, more sympathetic, and, on the whole, more effective, where the organist is not the sole authority, but is prepared to act loyally in concert with a choirmaster of experience and cultivated taste. Few organists have ever *heard themselves play*, and this is sometimes forgotten by members of our congregations who freely criticize the over-playing of the organ on occasions when the singing of the choir is hopelessly lost in the torrent of sound waves. A good time is coming when, all differences between architects and organ-builders having been amicably arranged, our organists will be so placed that they may hear *exactly* the effect they are producing, and its relation to the efforts of their choristers. Up to date, most organists hear much *more* of their choir and much *less* of their organs than ever falls to the lot of the worshippers, while the members of the choir too frequently are over-accompanied, and their work is rendered unnecessarily fatiguing. An arrangement of the console, by which the organist when playing could face his singers and at the same time judge exactly, as to his organ effects, would be most invaluable especially where the organist is also choirmaster.

Another difficulty attending the dual arrangement is that of the keeping "touch" as between organist and choir. Not many members of choirs arrive before the opening voluntary is about due, and few care to sit out the closing one before rising to depart; so that opportunities of friendly intercourse between organist and choristers are but few. The choirmaster who is this *alone* can make it a part of his business to pay personal attention to the singers, in many ways tending to promote the success of the common work.

In cases where the music, instrumental and vocal, is entirely in the hands of the organist, the services of a fairly good accompanist at the choir rehearsals should be secured, the organist being thus able to devote all his attention to production of tone, pronunciation, light and shade, etc., which, if properly looked after, will be found to fully occupy all his talent for the time being. A choirmaster glued to his seat at the piano, or worse, at his harmonium, is not an edifying spectacle; neither is his choir ever likely under such guidance to do either themselves or their director much credit. Keep the aforesaid offices distinct if possible; if not, let the organist, while acting as choirmaster, accept and encourage rising talent in the work of accompanying. Among the instances in which the offices have been

held by two officials unsuccessfully, we should probably find a large proportion in which the organist was the *musician*, and the choirmaster merely a musical man of more or less social standing, and characterized by a good deal of fussy self-assertion. Whimsical, crotchety, overbearing, *his* choice, *his* style, *his* experience are always to the fore, and all suggestions of improvement not emanating from *his* profound brain are foredoomed to destruction. On the other hand, some organists are just a little conceited. Yielding with poor grace to the direction of the choirmaster at the rehearsal, they take their own little revenge on the Sunday, when they carry out their own devices. Remonstrance is all too late, and lasting discord and ill-feeling are the result, the climax being probably reached in the dismissal of the organist or the resignation and removal of the choirmaster to another "sphere of usefulness" (?).

The strongest and almost overwhelming reason for insisting that the two offices should be held by the same person, is rather moral than musical—namely, that thus all disputes, strife, emulations, and the like, are put out of the question. Doubtless special grace is needed among high officials in the musical realm, so proverbial for diversity of opinion. It would be quite easy to quote typical cases in which nothing short of an oft-repeated miracle would suffice to keep things going smoothly. But the arrangement most nearly approaching perfection which one has seen was, in brief, this: The organist, young, rather reserved, and sensitive, having a thorough knowledge of music and perfect control of a fine instrument, worked in conjunction with a gentleman boasting little technical knowledge of the organ, but with a good voice, fine taste, and large experience of choral matters. The latter took the entire responsibility of choice of tunes, expression, etc., the former loyally carrying into effect any suggestions (and there were few needed) made by the choirmaster. The organ was kept subservient to the worship, and the capabilities of the choir were well developed.—Yours, etc.,

GAMBA.

To the Editor of the NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the correspondence in your interesting journal relative to the above. This is a question of vital importance to every church musician, as well as to the churches generally, and more especially "those who are in authority," since they have the selection of the organist in their hands. There is much to be said on both sides of the question. Local circumstances, I think, may have something to do with it. Different churches have different requirements. In my humble opinion the organist should have the direction and control of all the music of the church, and therefore he *should* be choirmaster as well as organist.

Doubtless there are some churches where, perhaps, the two offices had better be divided; but these are exceptions, and are few in number.

In your last issue "Dual" gives it as his opinion that it is impossible for one man to *efficiently* discharge *both* duties, but this assertion is not verified by facts. The same writer also says, "the organ takes or should take the whole attention of the player;" this, in my opinion, is quite as it should be—on *Sundays*. All the "little errors in singing" (which really means the *training* of the choir) should be remedied at the *choir practice*, on a week evening, so that on Sunday he can devote his attention to his instrument, and the accompaniments.

In conclusion, I would urge on all young organists the importance of becoming good choir-trainers, and to study thoroughly and well this branch of their duty. Human voices are not, on the whole, so easy to manage as a group of organ pipes, but they will repay the trainer for all the trouble and patience he takes with

them, if he does his duty. Church authorities should also see, when electing a new organist, that he possesses some knowledge of the art of choir-training, without which he is only half-equipped for his duties.

—Yours faithfully,
May 13th, 1889.

CHORAGUS.

ORGAN SPECIFICATION.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—I should be glad to know the opinion of your readers with regard to the following specification of an organ which is intended to be built for a church seating about four hundred people. As the funds at our disposal (at present) are very limited, it is feared we cannot afford to have more stops than are below specified. It is, in my opinion, a more difficult matter to prepare a specification for a small organ than for a large one, as one naturally wants to get as much power and the best value he can for his money. Can your readers suggest any improvement?

GREAT ORGAN.		PEDAL ORGAN.	
1 Open Diapason .	8 feet	11 Bourdon .	16 feet
2 Dulciana .	8 "	2 comp. Pedals to Great	
3 Clarabella .	8 "		
4 Principal .	4 "		
5 Harmonic Piccolo	2 "		
2 Spare slides			
SWELL ORGAN.		COUPLES.	
6 Open Diapason .	8 feet	12 Swell to Great	
7 Gamba .	8 "	13 Swell super oct. to Great	
8 Gemshorn .	4 "	14 Swell to Pedals	
9 Oboe .	8 "	15 Great to Pedals	
10 Voix Celestes .	1 "		
1 Spare slide			

May 20th, 1889.

Yours truly,
ORGANIST.

Reviews.

Three Hymn Tunes. For Choir or School Festivals. By Wm. Wright, Organist of High Pavement Chapel, Nottingham. (Novello & Co. Price 1½d.) Mr. Wright evidently knows how to write effectively, and yet simply, for choirs and schools. The three hymns here set to music are "Come, let us all unite to sing;" "We are waiting by the river;" and "Work, for the night is coming." Choirmasters will do well to see these Tunes.

The Boyhood of Christ. A Sacred Cantata. Composed by Albrecht Brede. (J. Curwen & Son, 8 & 9, Warwick Lane, E.C. 2s.) This is a work adapted to the voices of boys and girls, and therefore supplies a want that has been felt far and wide, by those in charge of the music of the Sunday School. The work which is written for five solo voices (three sopranos, and two contraltos), and chorus, comprises forty-four numbers, all of which are melodious and suitable for children's voices. This Cantata ought to become a favourite with every Sunday School Choir of moderate ability.

The Fountain of Life. Festival Anthem. By F. C. Hathaway. (Weekes & Co., 14, Hanover Street, W.) This anthem, the words for which have been arranged by the Rev. Joseph Shillito, contains great variety; it opens with a quartet, then follow a duet, chorus (unison and harmony), duet and chorus.

The Singers, and The Reaper and the Flowers. Two songs. By Edwin Drewett, A.C.O. (J. L. King,

Highbury Corner, London, N. 2s. each.) These are two very effective songs; the words and music of the former being admirably suited to each other.

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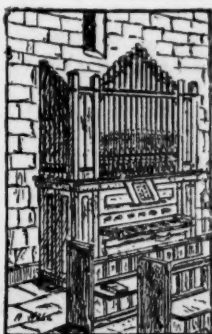
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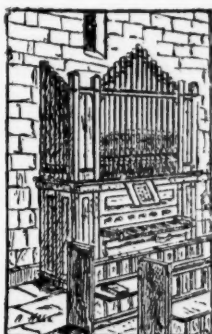
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